



## Southwest Area Incident Management Team

TEAM 5 – Dave Gesser– INCIDENT COMMANDER

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### Community meeting tonight; Fire suppression is ongoing, hazards still present Daily Update, Sunday, June 23, 2024

**Public Information Line:** 575-323-8258 or 575-323-8378

**Media Information Line:** 575-323-8053

**Phone Line Hours:** 8 am – 8 pm

**Email:** 2024.southfork@firenet.gov

**Acres:** South Fork – 17,551; Salt – 7,775

**Location:** South Fork – Ruidoso Area  
Salt – 7 mile west of Mescalero, NM

**Fuels:** mixed conifer, grass, pine/juniper

**Start Date:** June 17, 2024

**Personnel:** 1,114

**Containment:** South Fork – 31%; Salt – 7%

**Resources:** 22 Crews, 88 Engines, 13 dozers, and 18 water tenders. Aircraft remain available for bucket and retardant drops if the need arises, and conditions allow.

**Highlights:** Southwest Area Incident Management Team 5 will host a Community Meeting Facebook Live event on Sunday June 23, 2024, at 5pm MDT at <https://www.facebook.com/SWIMT5> with representatives from Lincoln County, Ruidoso Police Department, NM State Police, Red Cross, PNM, Windstream, Mescalero Apache Telephone, Tri-State Electric, Otero Co Electric.

**Unsanctioned drone use puts responders and the public at risk because of the potential for accidents and disruption of suppression operations. A Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) is still in place over the South Fork and Salt fire area. The TFR prohibits any and all drone use by the public, as they are considered aircraft under federal law.**

As evacuations and closures are lifted, extra precautions should be exercised as emergency and fire vehicles, engines and equipment continue to travel and work along roadways and incident personnel work and travel within neighborhoods.

**Fire Activity:** The South Fork and Salt fires saw additional precipitation on Saturday, making it difficult for crews to access some areas due to unsafe conditions. On Sunday, weather conditions will allow firefighters to continue securing the perimeter and responding to hot spots within the interior of the fire area.

These fires are a long-duration event, and as such, as weather changes occur and temperatures increase, fire activity will increase in unburned pockets of fuel, including stumps and downed trees. As these fuels reignite, smoke may be visible.

Damage and structure assessments are still being conducted. Crews will be available to respond to any new starts and flare ups as needed.

**Weather:** The potential for scattered storms exists today as warmer weather moves into the area. Temperatures will warm to above normal and winds will be mostly light.

**Smoke:** Light smoke was seen on both the South Fork and Salt fires on Saturday. Smoke production will remain light to moderate on Sunday. More variable wind direction, especially during the morning, may lead to light smoke and moderate air quality at times for all locations around the fires. Additional details are available at <https://outlooks.wildlandfiresmoke.net/outlook/430b2c05>.

**Evacuations:** Evacuation and closure status are transitioning. Use [www.lincolncountynm.gov](http://www.lincolncountynm.gov) and [www.ruidoso-nm.gov/south-fork-fire](http://www.ruidoso-nm.gov/south-fork-fire) for the latest information. Contact the Lincoln County Emergency Operations Center at 575-258-6900 if you have questions.

**Closures:** A South Fork Fire Emergency Closure Order was issued on June 20, 2024, for national forest lands within the Smokey Bear Ranger District. The identified areas, and roads and trails therein, are closed to public access to allow firefighting personnel to work and through the fire area safely. More information is available at [www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/lincoln/alerts-notice/?aid=88199](http://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/lincoln/alerts-notice/?aid=88199).

**A Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) is also in place over the fire area. Visit <https://www.tfr.faa.gov> for more information. Drone flights are also prohibited within this area. If you fly, we may have to ground our air resources.**

**More information:**

Inciweb: <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/nmmea-south-fork-and-salt>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SWIMT5>

Smoke Outlook: <https://outlooks.wildlandfiresmoke.net/outlook/430b2c05>

Lincoln County Government: [www.lincolncountynm.gov](http://www.lincolncountynm.gov)

Mescalero Apache Tribe: <https://mescaleroapachetribe.com>

Village of Ruidoso: [www.ruidoso-nm.gov/south-fork-fire](http://www.ruidoso-nm.gov/south-fork-fire)